

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3721

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 4967

E.O. 1162: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IS, JO, US, XF

SUBJ: ALLON DEFENDS, LIKUD ATTACKS, US POLICY

REF: TEL AVIV 4812

SUMMARY. FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON, REPLYING IN KNESSET TO LIKUD CHARGES THAT USG, AND SECRETARY IN PARTICULAR, WERE PURSUING POLICIES HOSTILE TO ISRAEL, MADE STRONG DEFENSE OF CONSTANCY AND FIRMNESS OF US SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL. ALLON STATED THAT, IN RESPONSE TO GOI OBJECTIONS TO REFERENCE TO DISENGAGEMENT OF FORCES IN US-JORDAN JOINT STATEMENT, SECRETARY HAD FURNISHED "DIRECT, IMPORTANT AND SATISFACTORY CLARIFICATIONS" IN REGARD TO NEXT STAGE OF NEGOTIATIONS. ALLON FURTHER STATED THAT ISRAELI CRITICISM OF US' INVITATION TO RABIN WAS INORDINATELY EXAGGERATED. IN ALLON'S VIEW, THERE WERE NUMBER OF GOOD REASONS FROM ISRAELI VIEWPOINT FOR RABIN TO VISIT US AT THIS TIME. END SUMMARY.

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1. AT BEGINNING OF BRISK ONE-HOUR SPECIAL SESSION OF KNESSET

AUGUST 28, HERUT MK LANDAU, SPEAKING FOR LIKUD IN PLACE OF BEGIN (WHO IS IN HOSPITAL) CRITICIZED US POLICY TOWARD ISRAEL AND ME IN VIRULENT TERMS AND, IN PARTICULAR, ATTACKED SECRETARY PERSONALLY AS ENEMY OF ISRAEL.

2. FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON FORCEFULLY REPLIED TO LANDAU BY AFFIRMING THAT ISRAEL HAD NO FIRMER FRIEND THAN US DESPITE OCCASIONAL DIFFERENCES WHICH CROPPED UP BETWEEN JERUSALEM AND WASHINGTON. ALLON CHARACTERIZED SECRETARY AS TRUE FRIEND OF ISRAEL WHO HAD PROVEN HIS FRIENDSHIP IN TIME OF TRIAL, EVEN THOUGH SOME OF HIS TACTICS DID NOT ALWAYS APPEAL TO ISRAEL, AND NOT EVERYTHING WHICH HE SAID OR DID WAS GRATIFYING. ALLON CHARACTERIZED LIKUD CRITICISM OF SECRETARY AS ENEMY OF ISRAEL AS ASTOUNDING IN ITS LACK OF PROPORTION, REMINDING KNESSET THAT HE WAS THE AMERICAN FOREIGN MINISTER AND REPRESENTED AS SUCH AMERICAN, NOT ISRAELI, ASPIRATIONS AND INTERESTS.

3. AS REGARDS REFERENCE IN JORDAN-ISRAEL JOINT STATEMENT TO DISENGAGEMENT OF FORCES, ALLON SAID THAT HE HAD MADE IT ABSOLUTELY CLEAR DURING HIS WASHINGTON VISIT AT END OF JULY THAT ISRAEL DID NOT APPROVE OF CONCEPT OF "DISENGAGEMENT" IN JORDANIAN CONTEXT. HE STATED THAT GOI WAS SURPRISED AND HAD OBJECTED TO ITS INCLUSION IN JOINT STATEMENT, HOWEVER NONCOMMITAL IT WAS, "IN CASE IT MIGHT BE INCORRECTLY INTERPRETED BY ARAB FACTORS".

3. ALLON SAID THAT SECRETARY'S REPLY TO ISRAELI OBJECTIONS, SPECIFICS OF WHICH HE WOULD NOT REVEAL IN PLENARY SESSION OF KNESSET, CONTAINED "DIRECT, IMPORTANT AND SATISFACTORY CLARIFICATIONS. IT IS THESE BINDING CLARIFICATIONS WHICH COUNT, AS FAR AS WE ARE CONCERNED, IN REGARD TO THE CONTINUATION OF THE POLITICAL MOVES, AND AS SUCH THEY ARE SATISFACTORY." ALLON FURTHER TOOK NOTE OF SECRETARY'S CLARIFICATION ON SUBJECT AT AUGUST 19 PRESS CONFERENCE.

5. ALLON SAID THAT GOI REGRETTED THAT US SAW FIT TO REFER TO "DISENGAGEMENT OF FORCES" IN JOINT STATEMENT BUT ON NO ACCOUNT SHOULD MATTER BE BLOWN UP OUT OF ALL PROPORTION, PARTICULARLY AFTER POSITIVE CLARIFICATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN RECEIVED.

6. AS TO ISRAELI CRITICISM OF MANNER IN WHICH INVITATION WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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EXTENDED TO RABIN TO VISIT US NEXT MONTH, ALLON SAID THAT "TO TRANSFORM THIS MARGINAL MATTER INTO SOMETHING OF FATEFUL IMPORTANCE, AS IT WERE, IN AMERICAN-ISRAELI RELATIONS, OR IN THE US SECRETARY OF STATE'S ATTITUDE TO US--THAT IS WORSE THAN A BLUNDER. THAT IS A HARMFUL FOLLY". ALLON, AFTER RECALLING FACT THAT INVITATION CAME AS FOLLOW-UP TO JUNE 17 US-ISRAEL COMMUNIQUE, NOTED THAT PURELY FROM ISRAELI VIEWPOINT THERE WERE NUMBER OF GOOD REASONS FOR RABIN TO VISIT US AT THIS

TIME, GIVEN CHANGE IN AMERICAN PRESIDENCY AND RECENT VISITS BY ARAB STATEMEN.

7. IN LIKUD PRESENTATION, LANDAU ALSO SAID THAT ISRAEL SHOULD START ACTING ACCORDING TO ITS OWN NATIONAL INTERESTS AND NOT ACCEPT SECRETARY'S DICTATES. HE ACCUSED RABIN OF FALLING IN WITH SECRETARY'S " SALAMI SYSTEM" FOR GIVING BACK TERRITORIES, PIECE BY PIECE. LANDAU BELIEVED THAT THERE WAS GOOD CHANCE OF BRINGING ABOUT CHANGE IN PRESENT US POLICIES BY USING LEVERAGE OF US JEWISH COMMUNITY AND EXPLOITING NEW PRESIDENT'S NEED FOR WIDE PUBLIC SUPPORT. LANDAU IN ANALYZING SECRETARY'S RECENT DIPLOMATIC PERFORMANCE, COMMENTED THAT " HIS PROFILE HAS BEEN CONSIDERABLY REDUCED OF LATE, ESPECIALLY AFTER THE CYPRUS AFFAIR SHOWED UP THE HOLLOWNESS OF GREAT POWER PROMISES AND THE INEFFECTIVENESS OF UN FORCES."

8. IN COURSE OF VERBAL SPARRING DURING DEBATE, HERUT MEMBER GEULA COHEN CREATED UPROAR BY CHARGING ALLON WITH "BEING A GREATER ENEMY OF ISRAEL'S NATIONAL INTERESTS THAN EVEN KISSINGER." ARIK SHARON ALSO ATTACKED ALLON, FOR BEING TAKEN IN BY US TACTICS.

9. AT CLOSE OF DEBATE, LABOR ALIGNMENT AND LIKUD BY PREARRANGEMENT AGREED TO CONTINUE DISCUSSION INFOREIGN AFFAIRS AND SECURITY COMMITTEE.

9. ISRAELI PRESS COVERAGE OF KNESSET DEBATE WAS EXTENSIVE BUT LARGELY WITHOUT COMMENT THOUGH JERUSALEM POST'S FRONT PAGE HEADLINE WAS "ALLON: KISSINGER IS TRUE FRIEND". HAARETZ' PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT BENZIMAN, HOWEVER, TOOK LIKUD TO TASK FOR CONVENING KNESSET DURING RECESS PERIOD FOR DEBATING EXERCISE WHICH SEEMED MORE AN EXCUSE FOR SHOW OF STRENGTH THAN EFFORT TO MAKE SUBSTANTIVE CONTRIBUTION TO PUBLIC DISCUSSION ON FUTURE OF WEST BANK. WE HEARD SAME
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OBSERVATION FROM SOME KNESSET MEMBERS.

10. AMIDST MOUNTING ISRAELI CONCERNS ABOUT US POLICY IN RECENT DAYS, COMMENTARY BY DAVAR'S DANIEL BLOCH, WHICH APPEARED ON DAY OF KNESSET DABATE, STRUCK BADLY-NEEDED NOTE OF MODERATION. BLOCH, AFTER RECALLING US ARMS SUPPLY ROLE AND EFFORT TO ACHIEVE DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENTS, NOTES THAT SECRETARY SO FAR HAS ACTED "FAIRLY, HONESTLY AND RESPECTABLY. HIS APPROACH IS PRAGMATIC AND BASED ONREALISTIC POLITICAL CONCEPTION." BLOCH ADDS THAT SECRETARY, KNOWING ISRAELI MENTALITY AND AWARE THAT DEADLOCK IS ROAD OF LEAST RESISTANCE FOR GOI, KEEPS ITS LEADERS ON ALERT BY CONFRONTING THEM WITH PROCEDURAL ESTABLISHED FACTS. BLOCH REGARDS LIKUD'S PLANS TO SEND DELEGATION TO US TO ROUSE PUBLIC OPINION AGAINST SECRETARY AS " EXTREMELY ILL-CONCEIVED." ISRAEL HAS ALWAYS HAD DIFFICULTIES WITH US SECRETARIES OF STATE

"AND KISSINGER PROBABLY IS BEST SO FAR, IN SPITE OF ALL COMPLAINTS--
JUSTIFIED AND UNJUSTIFIED."

11. COMMENT. WE BELIEVE THAT OUTCOME OF RABINVISIT, WHICH
ISRAELIS WILL BE ANALYZING IN MINUTE DETAIL FOR SIGNS OF FUTURE
COURSE OF US-ISRAEL RELATIONS, WILL OVERSHADOW CURRENT HULLABALOO.
ALLON'S FIRM DEFENSE OF US-ISRAEL RELATIONS WAS IMPRESSIVE,
BUT WE ARE ALSO STRUCK BY OBSERVATION OF ONE ISRAELI NEWSPAPERMAN
THAT ALLON, IN DEFENDING SECRETARY'S REPUTATION, WAS ALSO DEFENDING
HIS OWN.
KEATING

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